

HOME FOR THE HEROES

Main Office:

287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Telephone:

(860) 529-2571

Toll Free Number (CT only)

(800) 447-0961

Fax: (860) 721-5904

Commissioner

Dr. Linda S. Schwartz,
RN, FAAN

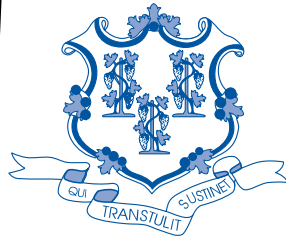
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www.state.ct.us/ctva

**Serving
Those
Who Served**



Serving Those



Who Served

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
CONNECTICUT VETERANS' HOME
ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT

From the desk of

Commissioner Linda Schwartz

I am happy to announce that after a four year absence, the Department of Veterans' Affairs will again hold a Stand Down this year at our Rocky Hill facility. As a matter of fact, it will be a two day event on Friday, September 30th and Saturday, October 1st.

Friday's Stand Down will be for homeless veterans who need assistance in obtaining their benefits and other services while the Saturday event will be for returning military personnel and for the families of Connecticut residents who have been deployed overseas.

Our department, the Department of Labor, the Connecticut National Guard and other state agencies, as well as the federal VA, will provide medical screenings, federal and state veteran benefit information and education and employment assistance. Families of deployed veterans will also be informed about the services available to them while their loved ones are away serving their country.

For more information, call us at (860) 721-5930 or 1-800-550-0000.

Our veterans have found **THE ROAD TO RECOVERY!**

It is a familiar story for the staff of our agency's Veterans Recovery Center. For whatever reason, either military or civilian, a veteran becomes addicted to alcohol or drugs. He or she loses everything because of that addiction. Family, friends, a home, a job all become distant memories and are swallowed up by a bottle or a syringe. When the veteran cries out for help, there is someone here to answer that plea.

The Veterans Recovery Center, headed by Clinical Director Dr. Felice Guberman, offers long term treatment for those who are in recovery from their addiction. After taking part in a detoxification program at a federal VA or other facility, veterans who are clean and sober for at least twenty-days are eligible to apply to the center. They must have a long term desire to return back into the community and once again, become productive members. Rehabilitation counselors and a psychologist are available to guide them along a clear pathway to recovery.

Individual and group counseling sessions are held to assist in the recovery process, overcome any personal barriers to recovery, which may exist, and help the veteran toward a stable and long term abstinence from mind-altering substances. There are daily A.A. and other support type meetings at the V.R.C. or, in some cases, at an

outside location. A resident must attend at least four of these meetings a week. Relapse prevention, therapy, grief support groups and dual diagnosis support are part of the program.

As the veteran gains his or her confidence and their recovery is progressing satisfactorily, other services become available such as educational and vocational programs, employment counseling and job placement assistance.

While the staff at the Veterans Recovery Center is ready to welcome a veteran into its program and provide the necessary treatment and services the veteran needs, they are more content when they see that veteran walk out our front gate to begin a new and productive life.



Residents of our Home observe **LOYALTY DAY!**



The Connecticut VFW and its Auxiliaries sponsored “A Salute to America and its Veterans” for our residents on Loyalty Day. The observance was started in the 1930s by the VFW as a way to counteract May Day, a Communist celebration. There were patriotic songs by “The Sweet Adelines”, a female singing group and music from “The Heartbeat Dixieland Jazz Band.” The “colors of the day” were red, white and blue.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

"Good News On Horizon For Connecticut Veterans"

By Governor M. Jodi Rell

First, let me just say that it is an honor for me to be your Governor and that I am honored to be a contributor to your newsletter. You are Connecticut's heroes. You have made and continue to make this state and this country great. The Rell Administration will never forget the sacrifices you have made.

I thought I would provide a summary of positive news that has emerged in recent weeks that will result in a better quality of life for Connecticut's veterans.



New Legislation

The Legislature approved a package of benefits I recommended to assist our veterans, our servicemen and women and their families. The package includes:

- Exempting half of veterans' military pensions from the state income tax
- Dramatically increasing the "death benefit" for Connecticut residents activated to serve in conflict. Families with young children, for instance, would receive \$100,000, plus \$50 a month per child, until the children reach the age of 18.
- Providing bonuses of \$50 a month to activated National Guard troops serving in Southwest Asia

A new \$31 million state veterans' home

The Office of Facility Management in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has approved an outline of costs for the new state veterans' hospital in Rocky Hill. I view the Home as a symbol of Connecticut's continuing commitment to our veterans, and I'm confident we will all be proud of the final result. This is one more way we can honor our citizens who have fought to defend our country with pride and valor.

Helping homeless southwestern Connecticut veterans

We recently announced \$299,880 to help get our homeless veterans housing, on-the-job training, counseling, and assistance in finding a job. My goal is to make homelessness and unemployment among Connecticut's veterans a thing of the past. This funding will provide veterans with emergency shelter, substance abuse and job counseling, transportation and medical referral.

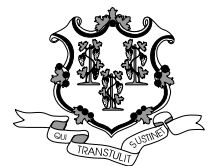
Satellite information offices

The Department of Veterans' Affairs Office of Advocacy and Assistance currently staffs full time offices in five of the state's major cities, but satellite offices are now being opened in all regions of Connecticut to make it easier and convenient for Connecticut veterans to receive the services, benefits and information to which they are entitled. For example:

- Electric Boat Corporation's Groton facility on Eastern Point Road and will serve all employees who are veterans. It is open every fourth Tuesday of every month between 11 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.
- The Shelton Senior Center on 81 Wheeler Street will be opened on the fourth Tuesday of every month between the hours of 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
- An office in the Torrington Parkade at 486 Winsted Road, off of Route 8 will be open the third Tuesday of every month between the hours of 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

These offices will help veterans with their VA claims, medical referrals and inform them of the many state and federal benefits available to Connecticut veterans.

As your Governor, I pledge to continue to work hard on behalf of all veterans. You can count on me, and I urge you to call my office toll free at 1-800-406-1527 with any questions or concerns.



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

TEL: (860) 566-4840, FAX: (860) 524-7396

www.ct.gov/governor

Works of our residents on display at
ANNUAL VETERANS ART SHOW



It began in 1999 when several residents of our Veterans Home signed up for an Art Therapy Program. It was designed to unleash the hidden creative talents of some veterans as well as provide a new hobby for others taking part. The result was the 5th Annual Veterans Art Show with more than 35 residents displaying their oil paintings, photography, drawings, poetry and crafts.



Residents of the Veterans' Home enjoy **TIME FOR RECREATION!**

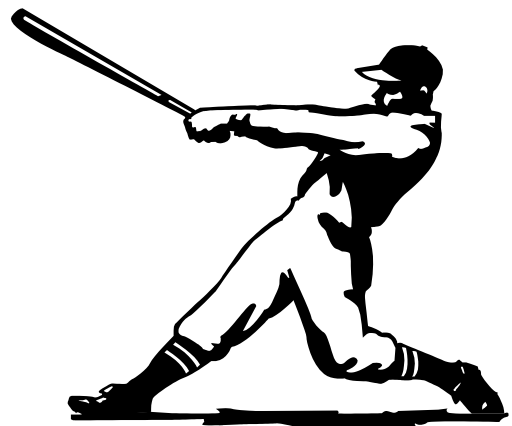
While our residents spend much of their time in the classroom, in job training, counseling or working part time at our facility, Recreation Therapist Dan Perreault provides activities to improve their bodies as well as their minds. There are year round events to allow them to enjoy their favorite sports as a participant or as a spectator.

The Veterans' Home softball team plays 20 games a season in an informal league, which includes teams from other state agencies, businesses, private rehabilitation facilities and organizations. Basketball is played throughout the year, with "in house" teams playing at the Rocky Hill Community Center gymnasium during the fall and winter and on our facility's outdoor courts during the warm weather. Our active residents also belong to a bowling league that uses the alleys in Newington. At the end of the season, a banquet is held and trophies awarded for bowling accomplishments.

There are also horseshoes, bocci matches and volleyball games to keep everyone involved in sports. Those who enjoy playing cards can test their skill in set back and pinochle tournaments. In addition, tournaments are also held for those active playing pool or ping pong. For residents who enjoy working out and staying in shape, there's the newly renovated weight room with state of the art equipment.

Our veterans also hit the road with visits to New York Yankee and Boston Red Sox major league baseball games. Minor league ball is also enjoyed at games played by the New Britain Rock Cats or Norwich Navigators. In July, some will go canoeing on the Farmington River, while others will try their hand at deep sea fishing in August. Basketball fans will be in the stands when the Boston Celtics play an NBA game on Veterans Day and football followers will cheer on the Super Bowl Champions New England Patriots in November.

As you can see, recreation and sports are an important part of our veterans' lives.

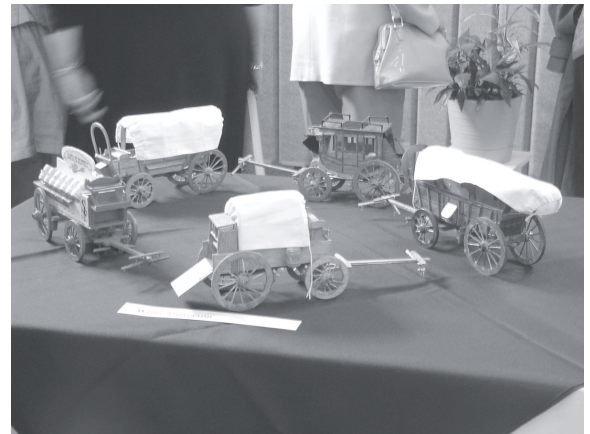


Those who helped our veterans
are recognized at the

ANNUAL VOLUNTEERS APPRECIATION RECEPTION



During the course of the year, hundreds of citizens donate their time, effort and financial assistance to our Veterans' Home and its residents. These individuals and organizations provide our veterans with clothing, toiletries, TV sets and other items to make their lives a little better. More than 200 of these volunteers were honored at our facility's Annual Volunteers Appreciation Reception and received awards recognizing their selfless efforts.



(Photographs by
Charlotte Story of the Department of Veterans' Affairs)

Directions:

From 91N:

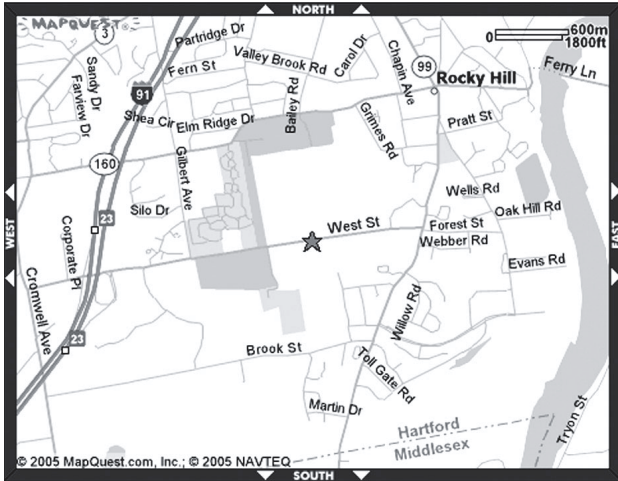
Exit 23, right at end of ramp, take left at 3rd traffic light to enter our facility.

From 91S:

Exit 23, left at end of ramp, take left at 4th traffic light to enter our facility.

From 84:

Take 91 South and follow above directions.



VETERANS' TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

State of Connecticut

Department of Veterans' Affairs 1-800-447-0961

Admitting Department (860) 529-2571

Billing Department (860) 721-5839

Residential & Rehabilitative Services..... (860) 721-5833

Hospice Program/Respite Care (860) 721-5955

Office of Advocacy and Assistance (860) 721-5893

Public Affairs..... (860) 721-5939

Connecticut Veterans' Cemetery (860) 721-5838

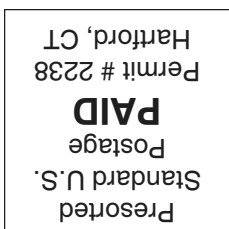
Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund
(For temporary, emergency assistance) (860) 953-4345

FEDERAL VA MEDICAL CENTERS

West Haven..... (203) 932-5711

Newington (860) 666-6951

FEDERAL VA INFO LINE 1-800-827-1000



Connecticut Veterans' Home
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

